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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510 - 3505

April 20, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer,

I write you today to urgently request that Congress continue supporting state and local governments as they weather unprecedented public health and economic challenges related to COVID-19. To this end, the next coronavirus package must include robust, dedicated, and flexible federal funding for local governments.

As you know, the CARES Act provided \$150 billion for the Coronavirus Relief Fund. This is an important first step that will help our cities and counties address unanticipated expenses related to the coronavirus. This funding, however, will not fully address the most urgent and pressing need for local governments: revenue replacement. Already, our cities and counties are slashing critical services and furloughing employees. The combination of surging costs and plummeting revenues leave our local governments with few choices aside from these last-resort measures. Even when the immediate threat of the public health crisis does eventually pass, the economic effects promise to threaten the stability of our local governments for years to come.

Congress must include additional state and local government funding beyond the \$150 billion that we provided in the CARES Act. The funding must be:

- Robust: the initial \$150 billion is an important first step but will be insufficient to address the critical needs of Ohio and the rest of the country. We must provide a second infusion of resources commensurate to our commitment in the CARES Act.
- Dedicated: local governments with populations under 500,000 should be able to apply directly for their allocation of funds.
- Flexible: funding must provide counties and cities the flexibility required to best meet the needs of their residents. This flexibility should include allowing local governments to use these funds, and funds from the CARES Act, to replace lost revenue.

I urge you to include robust, dedicated, and flexible funding for state and local governments in the next coronavirus package. COVID-19 has challenged our states, our country, and indeed this Congress in ways few would have expected. Our response to this crisis must be bold, it must be swift, and it must be responsive to the needs of the constituents we represent – meeting this moment demands nothing less. Continued support of state and local governments is an essential component of such a response. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

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